



Date: October 17, 2001

To: Inter-Regional Partnership Members

From: Staff

RE: State Planning & Research Grant for IRP Related Activities

The San Joaquin Council of Governments was awarded a grant by the California Department of Business, Housing and Transportation for IRP related activities, based on an application submitted over a year ago.

The application (attached) grant is very similar to the objectives of the IRP State Pilot Project that has emerged since the grant was submitted, in that it is directed at identifying employment sites near residential areas that house a prerequisite skill set, to help reduce trip lengths, and minimize traffic congestion. The grant proposes that a panel of economic development agencies from the five county IRP area coordinate site identification activities. The short-term impact of the proposal would be to strengthen partnerships across county lines between economic development agencies, and draw those agencies and employers into the jobs\housing imbalance discussion.

The grant provides \$80,000 from Business, Housing & Transportation, matched by \$20,000 in local funds. The local match may come from San Joaquin COG, and other COGs that partner with it in the study, and/or economic development agencies that would benefit from these activities.

Grant funds are to be expended over a 15-month period, beginning September 30, 2001 and ending December 30, 2002.

Requested Action

San Joaquin COG is interested in identifying ways that the IRP could collectively demonstrate compliance with the grant requirements, or if the IRP has any other economic development related activities that the grant would support.

A. BACKGROUND \ JUSTIFICATION

Very rapid job production in the San Francisco Bay Area coupled with much slower housing production has resulted in significant residential growth pressures in parts of the agriculturally rich San Joaquin Valley, an area not traditionally considered part of the Bay Area. The effect has been to:

- \$ drive up the price of formerly affordable housing opportunities near employment centers in and around Santa Clara County (Silicon Valley).
- \$ increase the demand for housing in Alameda, San Joaquin, Contra Costa and Stanislaus counties.
- \$ escalate the demand for urban services in the cities within those counties.
- \$ create a substantial commuter population that turns stresses highway and transit facilities within local communities and the Bay and Valley region.

In the next 20 years, the Bay Area counties are projected to add approximately 1.4 million new residents and jobs and only 508,000 new housing units. Close to half of the new residents may have difficulty finding appropriate housing within a close proximity to their jobs. The San Joaquin Valley counties will continue to be pressured to provide residential housing stock to meet the demand. The resulting commutes of up to 100 miles, and two hours in length, between housing and jobs threatens to increase traffic congestion, overwhelm existing transportation infrastructure, deteriorate air quality and negatively impact the quality of life of residents in the San Joaquin Valley and Bay Area.

In early 1998, an Interregional Partnership[®] was formed to address growth issues affecting both the San Joaquin Valley and San Francisco Bay Area. It consists of elected officials from the two San Joaquin Valley counties (San Joaquin, Stanislaus) and three Bay Area counties (Alameda, Contra Costa, Santa Clara) that have become economically linked by this growth phenomenon. Currently, the Interregional Partnership provides a forum for general discussions of mutual concerns, strategies and potential programs to mitigate the negative impacts of economically related yet geographically dispersed growth. One point has surfaced in nearly all of the Partnership's meetings: decisions by locally elected officials about jobs, housing, and the environment are now felt in neighboring municipalities, counties, and regions, yet no interregional mechanism exists to review and discuss potential impacts prior to approval.

This proposal would transition the Interregional Partnership from a quarterly discussion group of elected officials into a planning and economic partnership. Thus, it would create a new entity for congestion relief and demand management practices in the two region area.

B. OBJECTIVES

This proposal would survey employee skills in the five county area and identify employment sites near residential areas that house employees with the prerequisite skill set, to reduce trip lengths. The studies would be directed by a coordinating panel of economic development agencies from the five county area. The practical effect would be to draw employers and economic

development agencies into a jobs\housing discussion that currently focuses on housing developers as the culprits of the five county jobs\housing dilemma. By addressing the location of trip destinations (by matching job sites with employee skills) the short term impact of the proposal is to:

- \$ communicate development activities across county lines.
- \$ specify development mitigation measures on an interregional basis.
- \$ provide a new, alternative medium for discussing development-related concerns;
- \$ form partnerships that cross county lines between economic development agencies to reduce trip lengths and to match employees and employers.
- \$ draw economic development agencies and employers into the jobs\housing discussion.

The long term impact of this strategy is to reduce trip making and trip length across the five county multi-region, and to reverse the interregional imbalance of jobs and housing through steps which measure the performance of employers and economic development efforts.

Numerous proposed housing developments are most often the subject of the development review process. They often are synonymous with growth and are highlighted as the culprit in the jobs\housing growth dilemma. However, the impact of locating employment centers is often overlooked. By working with the economic development community, this proposal seeks to generate better information on matching employee job skills throughout the two regions with employment needs, resulting in reduced trip lengths. The combined effect of these two programs would be to:

- \$ create an interregional development review process that will educate elected officials, developers, employers, and the public about the effect local decisions have on neighboring communities and regions.
- \$ reduce vehicle miles traveled per employed resident throughout the five county area.
- \$ reduce air quality impacts.
- \$ locate employment in closer proximity to housing sites.
- \$ develop a solid database for assessing trip length for new employment and residential sites and compare them to trip lengths for sites developed prior to this proposal being implemented.
- \$ leverage in-kind services and funding from private and public agencies involved in planning and economic development.
- \$ improve access to jobs for underserved ethnic populations by promoting employment locations in the San Joaquin Valley counties, which increasingly serve as bedroom communities for the Bay Area counties. San Joaquin County, for example, is 55% white, 25% Latino, 14% Asian, and 5% African American.
- \$ bring the economic development community into the land use/transportation discussion, by making them a partner in achieving a better jobs/housing balance.

C. AUTHORITY

- \$ Title 23, U.S.C. Section 505, State Planning & Research

- § Title 23, U.S.C. Section 134(a) Metropolitan Planning, and Section 135(a) Statewide Planning
- § California Government Code Section 65086 requires Caltrans to carry out long-term system planning to identify future highway improvements in conjunction with regional transportation planning agencies.

D. RESOURCE INFORMATION:

Federal State Planning & Research Funds:	\$ 80,000
Local Funding from San Joaquin Co. Council of Governments, Stanislaus Co. Association of Governments, Association of Bay Area Governments and/or Economic Development Agencies	<u>\$ 20,000</u>
TOTAL	\$ 100,000

E. ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

On October 13, 1999, the Assembly Select Committee on Jobs-Housing Balance, chaired by Assemblyman Tom Torlakson (13th District, Alameda County) held a hearing with the Interregional Partnership to discuss Valley-Bay growth issues. Partnership members proposed that the State legislature create a five-county pilot project to improve the balance of jobs and housing between the Valley and Bay Area. The project would establish Opportunity sites@ which would provide incentives to build affordable housing near major employment centers or provide employers with incentives to locate jobs within close proximity to housing. As a first step, the Partnership proposed that the State provide funding to develop a GIS system for the five-county area so that the best opportunity zone locations could be identified. Assemblyman Torlakson introduced the bill (AB 2054) into the legislature his session. The Assembly Budget Sub-Committee=s review in March was very favorable and even increased the project budget to \$5 million so that collaborative efforts in other parts of the State could be part of the pilot project.

If successful, the legislative initiative could:

- § direct new employment to San Joaquin County;
- § contribute to a reduction in commute distances and an improvement in air quality;
- § contribute to reduced congestion in San Joaquin County=s commuter corridors, allowing more capacity for goods movement.

This grant proposal is consistent with this legislative initiative, and each would complement and further the objectives of the other.

F. PROPOSED ACTIVITIES

The lifetime of this grant proposal would be 15 months.

Start Date: September 30, 2001
Completion Date: December 30, 2002

Public Participation

This proposal incorporates a proactive public participation strategy that can be grouped into three areas:

1) *Informing the public of key decisions to be made.* SJCOG will distribute monthly agendas, reports, meeting packets and/or minutes to individuals, agencies and organizations affected by the proposal. In addition, SJCOG publishes the bi-monthly *Horizons* newsletter, which will update the public on the progress of implementing this proposal, including key decisions and milestones. Entities who receive these documents will include a cross section of media representatives, non-profit organizations, private businesses, and residents in the five-county area. SJCOG's mailing list of organizations that represent various segments of the general population, including ethnic, racial, elderly, disabled, and disadvantaged groups, will be supplemented by mailing lists from COGs and economic development agencies in the five county area.

2) *Involving the public early and often in the preparation of reports and programs.* SJCOG will use a combination of committees, fully noticed public hearings, workshops, forums, surveys, publications, the Internet (www.sjcog.org), public access television, and focus groups to inform, gauge and respond to issues and public questions and concerns. Stakeholders and interested individuals will be involved through direct mail, public hearings, and public workshops. Transportation plans and documents are circulated monthly to SJCOG's committees for review and comment. When comments are received on documents, they will be responded to in writing and included in the final plan or program. Issues will be either explained as to how they are currently addressed within the plan or program, or taken under consideration for inclusion within the plan or program.

3) *Making activities accessible to the public.* Once members of the public decide to get involved in the decision-making process, SJCOG will provide easy access to information and the public comment process. Strategies to accomplish this include:

- \$ providing clearly written reports, that avoid the use of jargon and include graphics;
- \$ making agendas and all handouts available to the public;
- \$ providing directions and signage to all meetings;
- \$ creating and distributing direct mail information announcing public meetings to impacted communities; and
- \$ promoting Speakers= Bureau availability to special interest groups throughout the region.

Agendas, staff reports, and committee reports will be available for downloading on the SJCOG website. Additionally, these materials will be mailed to key stakeholder groups.

Meetings will be held at locations and times that would be convenient for the public, and allow for compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Press releases would be issued, and newspaper coverage sought, at key project milestones.

Activities in this proposal would be conducted according to the following schedule:

Employment Site \ Employee Skill Studies

Economic Development Coordination Panel Established

January 30, 2002

Existing Employment Site and Skill Matching Data Gathering

May 1, 2002

First Report Completed on Panel Establishment and

July 1, 2002

Data Gathering

Economic Dev. Coordination and Employment Matching

Ongoing

Final Report

December 30, 2002

The proposal would evaluate the process, product and outcome of the Employment Site\Employee Skill studies, which would be summarized in an evaluation report.

Items of Expense	FY 2000-01	FY 2001-02	FY 2002-03
Headquarters PY	0.0	0.0	0.0
District PYs	0.0	0.0	0.0
PY Subtotal	0.0	0.0	0.0
PS Dollars	0	0	
PS Subtotal	\$0	\$0	\$0
General Expense			
Contract	\$0	\$50,000	\$50,000
OE Subtotal	\$0	\$50,000	\$50,000
TOTAL	\$0	\$50,000	\$50,000